

Delegation Asks President Obama to Support Governor O'Malley's Request for a Major Disaster Declaration As Communities Across Maryland Struggle to Recover from Tropical Storm Lee

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) joined Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin and Representatives Roscoe E. Barlett, Elijah E. Cummings, Chris Van Hollen, C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, John P. Sarbanes, Donna F. Edwards and Andy Harris, in sending a letter to President Barack Obama supporting Governor O'Malley's request for a declaration of a major disaster for the State of Maryland as a result of Tropical Storm Lee. If awarded, Maryland will become eligible for federal disaster recovery dollars through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), ensuring the state's already strained budget is not stretched any thinner.

“River levels during Tropical Storm Lee reached historic levels not seen since 1972 during Hurricane Agnes,” the letter reads. **“The unprecedented level of precipitation placed both residential and commercial areas in danger, and continues to have an economic impact in communities throughout Maryland.”**

On September 6, 2011, in response to the storm, Governor O'Malley directed the execution of the State CORE Emergency Operations Plan. A continued State of Emergency was declared on September 8, 2011 for the entire state to minimize destruction and threats to public safety.

Tropical Storm Lee deposited up to 20 inches of rain and caused major flooding and damage that washed out roadways, brought major highways to a halt, damaged government buildings, and destroyed homes and businesses. Governor O'Malley is requesting Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation for a number of counties, as well as Individual and Small Business Administration Assistance where needed.

The full text of the delegation's letter of support is as follows:

September 29, 2011

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our very strong support for Governor O'Malley's September 26, 2011 request for a declaration of a major disaster for the State of Maryland as a result of Tropical Storm Lee which impacted our state from September 6, 2011 through September 14, 2011. This storm deposited up to 20 inches of rain on the state, causing major flooding and damage. This storm arrived on the heels of Hurricane Irene, as Maryland continued to recover from that storm and its aftermath.

River levels during Tropical Storm Lee reached historic levels not seen since 1972 during Hurricane Agnes. The unprecedented level of precipitation placed both residential and commercial areas in danger, and continues to have an economic impact in communities throughout Maryland. In the Northern portion of the state, record rainfall occurring along the Susquehanna River forced the opening of nearly all 50 gates at the Conowingo Dam and the mandatory evacuation of Port Deposit in Cecil County. Prince George's and Charles Counties experienced flooding that washed out roadways, brought major highways to a halt, damaged government buildings, and destroyed homes and businesses.

In response to the storm, Governor O'Malley took appropriate action under Maryland law, directing the execution of the State CORE Emergency Operations Plan on September 6, 2011. A Continued State of Emergency was declared on September 8, 2011 for the entire state to minimize destruction and threats to public safety. The Governor is requesting Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation for a number of counties, but also Individual and Small

Business Administration Assistance where needed. We strongly support these requests.

Maryland and its local jurisdictions have contributed a vast amount of resources in a very short period, and we greatly appreciate the support of our federal partners throughout these successive weather events. Thank you for consideration of Maryland's request. We look forward to continuing to work with you in this recovery.

Sincerely,